





The Author—
"Buck Private" McCollum

Copyright 1919
L. C. McCOLLUM

published by
"BUCK PRIVATE" McCOLLUM AND BUDDIES
529 LYON BUILDING
SEATTLE, WASH.
All Rights Reserved



Foreword

I've never had a fling at this thing,
That they call writin' an' such,
An' haven't the art that a genius owns,
To put over the masterly touch.

I can only tell in a Doughboy's way,
Things that we all lived thru,
And if perchance you've been "Up There"
You'll know that they are true.

No artist, whether good or bad,
Can paint the sunset's glow,
Nor can any man who ever came back,
Describe that war and its woe.

So I'll lay no claim to the master's touch,
In the thots I've expressed herein,
But when you've finished reading them,
You'll know what it cost to win.

You'll know how a "Doughboy" feels when
he fights,
And also the joys of his play,
And may you accept them just as they are,
In a Doughboy's own crude way.

"Back Pirate" McCallum



Up There

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Perhaps those two short words

Don't sound like much to you;

But they are the entire volume

Of what you have been thru.

They tell of Chateau-Thierry and the Vesle,

And many a brave and daring tale

Of the Argonne, that terrible hell;

Where so many of our brave comrades fell.

They fell for a cause that was just and true,

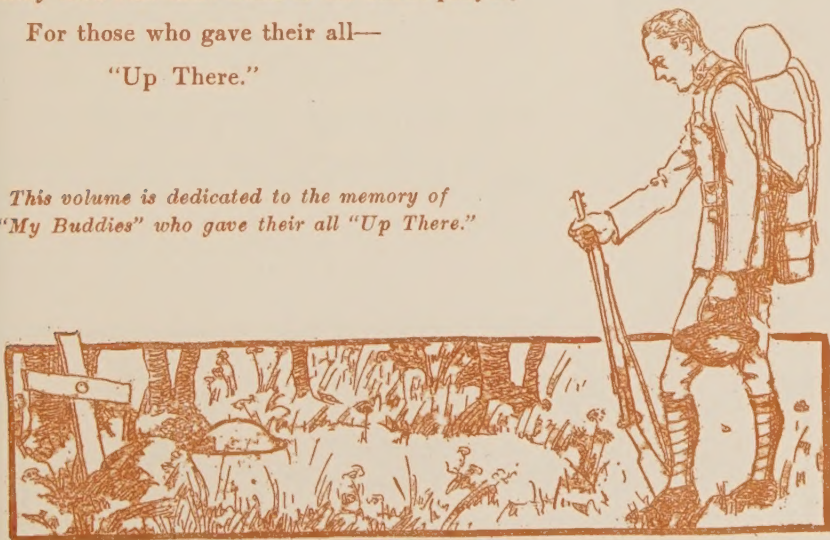
And to them a heavy tribute is due;

May God rest their souls is our silent prayer,

For those who gave their all—

"Up There."

*This volume is dedicated to the memory of
"My Buddies" who gave their all "Up There."*



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Bully Beef

I love my Canned Bill, I never knew
How good that stuff could taste in stew;
I love it hot, I love it cold,
Corned Willie never will grow old.

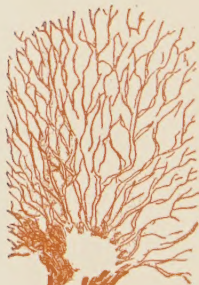


You walk into the kitchen
When you're thru a hard morning's drill,
And you get your old mess kit
Filled up with old corn "Bill."

It drives away your troubles,
And tho' you're far across the sea,
It's the thing that licked the Kaiser
In our fight for Liberty.

Tho' they call it our iron rations
And we carry it for miles,
It's always with you when you're hungry
And fills your face with smiles.

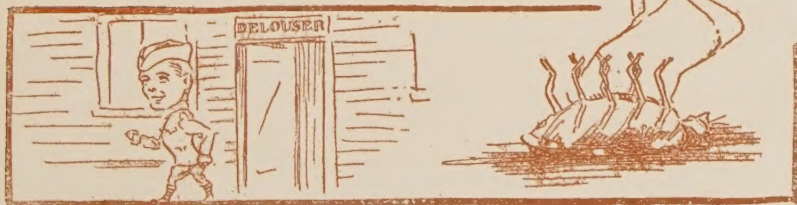
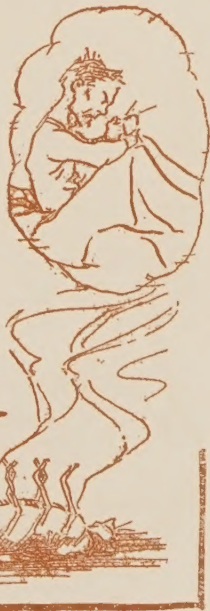
It has been through many a battle,
And on top it would always be,
And I don't see whatever keeps them
From giving Bill—a D. S. C.



Killed in Action

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Killed while in action, so they say,
Poor little fellow had lost his way,
In the Argonne woods and up on the Vesle;
He would dig like fury and crawl like a
snail.
My billet was small, but he didn't care,
He would dig himself in, and stay right
there,
For he made things snappy while digging in,
He was plumb full of hell, and fought to
win.
Tho' small of statute, he was full of fight,
And went over the top most every night;
Nearly all the boys knew him, up on the line,
For he kept them company most of the
time.
He fell while in action, and game to the last,
As through our delouser, the "wee fellow"
past,
Good-bye little cootie, we must leave you in
France;
We "killed you in action"—and were glad
of the chance.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

That Hike

Hey, Fellows!—

Remember the time
The Kaiz' got wise
And took to the Rhine?

Well, we were at Raucourt,
Waitin' returns—
And on the eleventh of November
The war adjourns.

Then gladly we mounted
Our packs on our back,
And with a song in our hearts
We started back.

Only to be stopped
At Ouches next day,
And told to go up to Mouzon;
Which was the other way.

Well, we done our five days' guard,
In the cold "Up There,"
And we'll never forget our billet,
The Church in the square.



Then came a rush order,
"Roll packs right away,"
As we'd parade in New York
On Christmas Day.

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

So for six days we hiked
Till we came to Floren',
And I guess you remember,
We were damn near all in.

But we were going home
So we didn't give a rap,
As we had been to the Front
And were used to that.

But when we got deloused—
Oh, Boy! how we swore—
For they hiked us to Les Isalets,
Which was twelve kilos', or more.

Then early and bright
The very next day,
We continued "That Hike"
On to "Broadway."



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

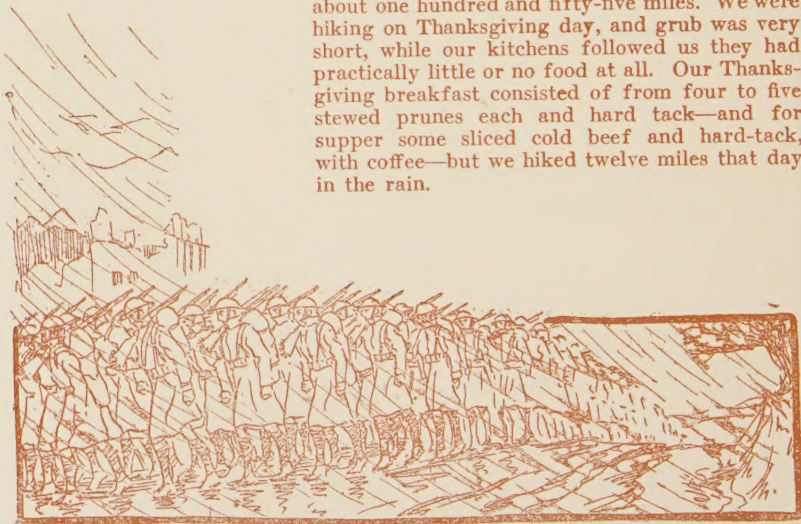


Well, for nine days we hiked
Up and down hills,
Till finally we landed
In Pointlaville.

Why grumble now?
You know it's all over,
And no doubt you're back home
In the land of clover.

So whenever you think
That things are going tough,
Just remember "THAT HIKE," boys,
"THAT'S ENOUGH!"

"THAT HIKE"—Is a true and accurate description of the hike that not only the 1st Battalion (or Whittlesey's Battalion, as it was better known), but the entire 77th Division made. It took 15 days' time and covered a distance of about one hundred and fifty-five miles. We were hiking on Thanksgiving day, and grub was very short, while our kitchens followed us they had practically little or no food at all. Our Thanksgiving breakfast consisted of from four to five stewed prunes each and hard tack—and for supper some sliced cold beef and hard-tack, with coffee—but we hiked twelve miles that day in the rain.



"We Are Coming Back"

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

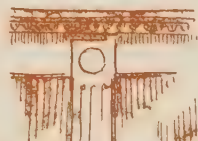
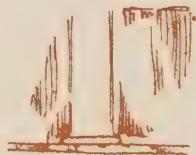
It's the going back I hate worst of all,
It grates on my nerves worse than gall,
A wreck, they'll say when I land today,
And with sighs of pity they'll turn away.

With empty sleeve an' my face a mess,
I'm no more than half a man, I guess,
And it's tearing my heart slowly apart,
An' I'm wondering how I'll get a new start.

I left these shores not so long ago,
As fit as any man who'd go,
I held my head as high as could be,
And was proud to fight for our liberty.

It isn't so hard to go in and fight,
When you know your cause is more than right,
And it isn't so hard for men to die,
But it's hard as hell to hear people sigh.

So, if perhaps, when I land,
You'll just take and shake my one good hand.
And try and forget and not sympathize,
It will help me forget those silent sighs.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

My Pals

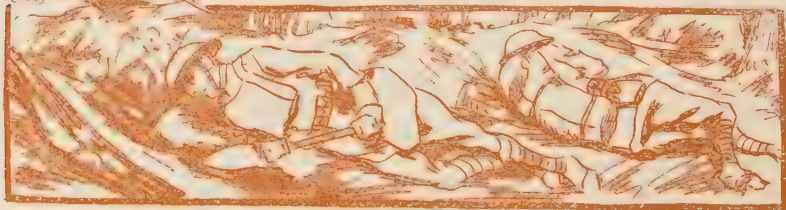
Of three Pals of mine I would tell,
And how they helped me live thru Hell.
First, there's "Billy," my old gas mask,
And for a better Pal you could never ask.

The first time I used him, as I remember,
Was up in the "Argonne" late in September,
The alarm had been sounded and brought a
cold chill,
But with "Billy" there, it changed to a thrill.

I pictured myself a-layin' there dead,
But grabbed and put on my "Billy" instead.
Three hours we lived thru that hellish gas,
Since then he's my Pal, first and last.

Second, is "Jim," my old "diggin'-in" tool,
And he was more than a Pal, except to a fool.
He'd help me dig in both night and day,
And made me war wise in his own quiet way.

We dug thru rock and sometimes ground,
Then slept the sleep of a dog-tired hound,
And thru any battle of raging hell,
He was my Pal, and served me well.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Last, but not least, comes "Jack," that boy,
Who was my one comfort and eternal joy,
Only a 'tin derby' he's often been called,
But never yet has old Jack stalled.

I've used him as a writing pad,
And as a seat he's not half bad,
I've used him to pound those queer tent poles,
And for protection in many shell holes.

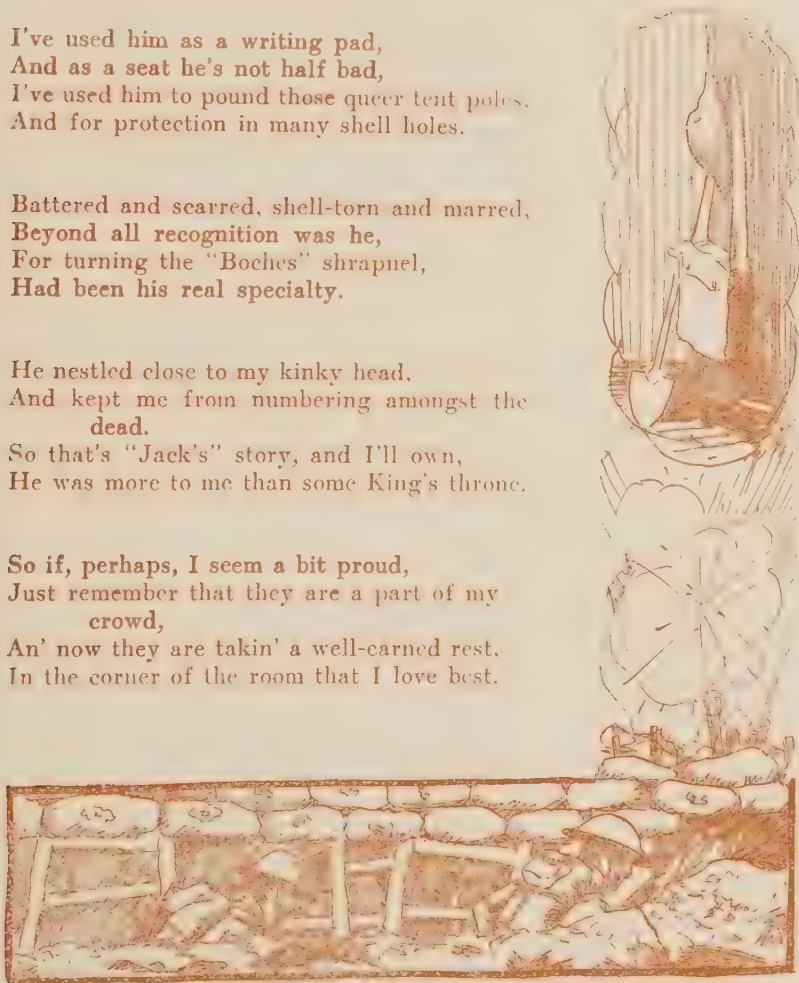
Battered and scarred, shell-torn and marred,
Beyond all recognition was he,
For turning the "Boches" shrapnel,
Had been his real specialty.

He nestled close to my kinky head,
And kept me from numbering amongst the
dead.

So that's "Jack's" story, and I'll own,
He was more to me than some King's throne.

So if, perhaps, I seem a bit proud,
Just remember that they are a part of my
crowd,

An' now they are takin' a well-earned rest,
In the corner of the room that I love best.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Old Detail Army

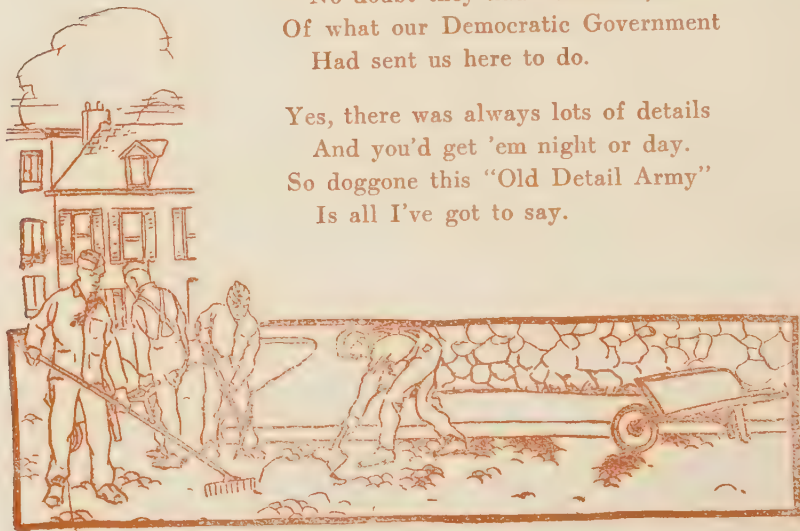
Doggone this "Old Detail Army"
Is all I've got to say,
For ever since the armistice
We've been laboring day by day.

With all the fighting over
The first thing that we done,
Was to clean up the town we billeted in;
And they thot we done it for fun

I never thot that I would be
A street cleaner brave and bold,
Until I started cleaning up France,
In the sleet, the rain and the cold.

They French folks they would laugh at us
No doubt they had ideas too;—
Of what our Democratic Government
Had sent us here to do.

Yes, there was always lots of details
And you'd get 'em night or day.
So doggone this "Old Detail Army"
Is all I've got to say.



Cooties

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

When you're standing at attention,
And the cooties duck below;
Just the way they come for seconds,
Ain't it Hell?—well, I'll say so!

In the lines the boys were diggin'
With their shovels to get in;
While the "Cootie" rigged his digger
With his rig for digging in.

At the Front the Majors had 'em,
Every Captain raised his share;
But there sure was Hell a-poppin'
When a "Buck" had one to spare.

Now every nation has them,
The great ones and the small;
But for "Tame" and "Naughty" cooties,
Rainy France, she leads them all.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Historical

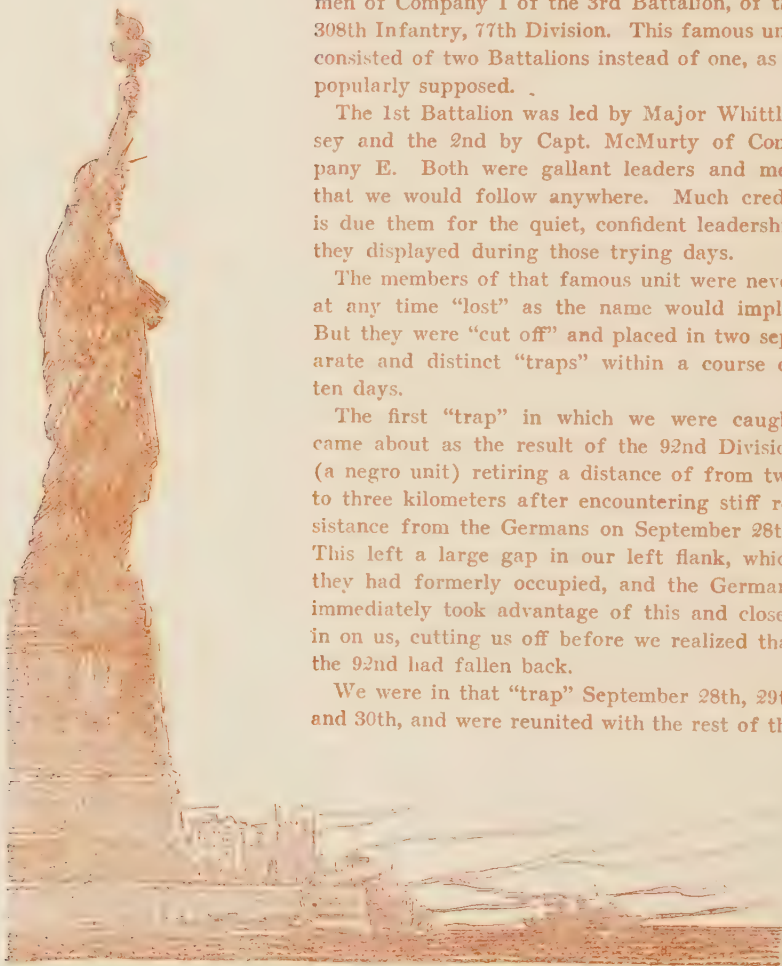
The "*Lost Battalion*" consisted of Companies A, B, and C of the 1st Battalion, Companies E, F, G, and H, of the 2nd Battalion, and a few men of Company I of the 3rd Battalion, of the 308th Infantry, 77th Division. This famous unit consisted of two Battalions instead of one, as is popularly supposed. .

The 1st Battalion was led by Major Whittlesey and the 2nd by Capt. McMurty of Company E. Both were gallant leaders and men that we would follow anywhere. Much credit is due them for the quiet, confident leadership they displayed during those trying days.

The members of that famous unit were never at any time "lost" as the name would imply. But they were "cut off" and placed in two separate and distinct "traps" within a course of ten days.

The first "trap" in which we were caught came about as the result of the 92nd Division (a negro unit) retiring a distance of from two to three kilometers after encountering stiff resistance from the Germans on September 28th. This left a large gap in our left flank, which they had formerly occupied, and the Germans immediately took advantage of this and closed in on us, cutting us off before we realized that the 92nd had fallen back.

We were in that "trap" September 28th, 29th and 30th, and were reunited with the rest of the

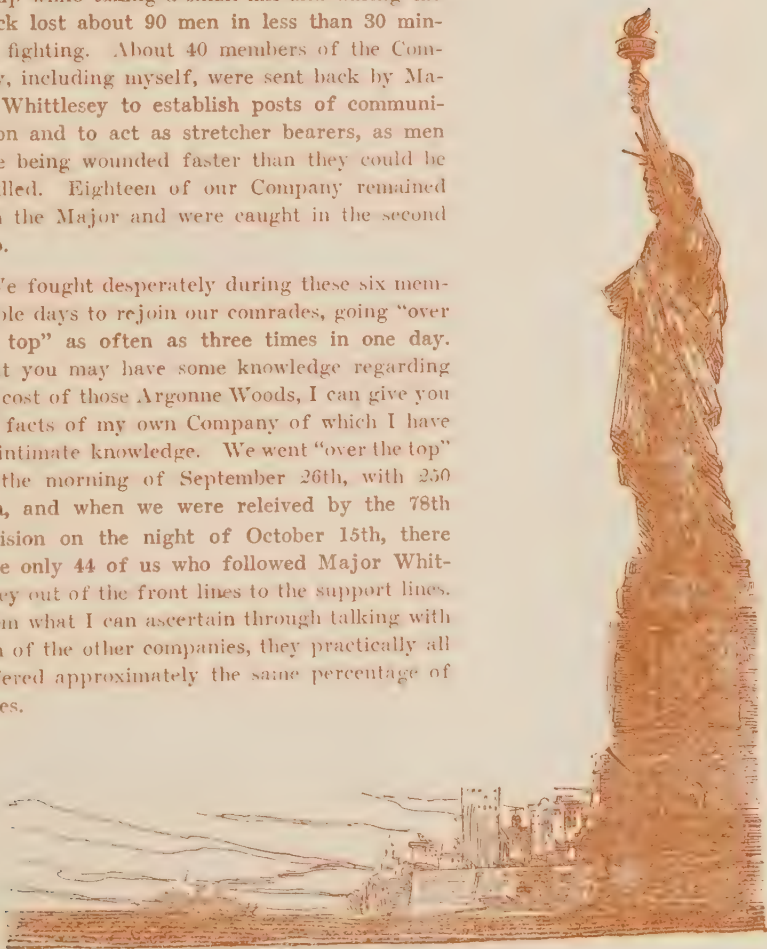


Division on October 1st. October 2nd the Battalion was again caught in another "trap" which lasted for six days. Needless to say that the men suffered greatly during these periods.

On the day intervening these two traps Company A (of which I was a member) was badly cut up while taking a small hill and during the attack lost about 90 men in less than 30 minutes fighting. About 40 members of the Company, including myself, were sent back by Major Whittlesey to establish posts of communication and to act as stretcher bearers, as men were being wounded faster than they could be handled. Eighteen of our Company remained with the Major and were caught in the second trap.

We fought desperately during these six memorable days to rejoin our comrades, going "over the top" as often as three times in one day. That you may have some knowledge regarding the cost of those Argonne Woods, I can give you the facts of my own Company of which I have an intimate knowledge. We went "over the top" on the morning of September 26th, with 250 men, and when we were relieved by the 78th Division on the night of October 15th, there were only 44 of us who followed Major Whittlesey out of the front lines to the support lines. From what I can ascertain through talking with men of the other companies, they practically all suffered approximately the same percentage of losses.

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

The Fight of the Lost Battalion



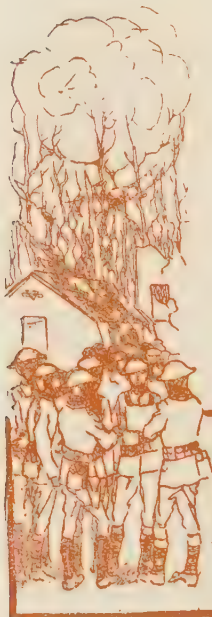
Back of Florent, in the Argonne Forest,
Were gathered a handful of men,
Waiting the word to "go in" again,
But to come out—God alone knew when.

East met west in those few short hours,
And were drawn together as one;
As brother to brother, and man to man,
They met to suppress the Hun.

As they looked in each other's faces,
What they saw there made them turn
'way,

As each was hastily scribbling
A note, to some loved one far 'way.

For each of them were thinking thoughts
That come to but very few men;
For on the morrow they'd go "Over the
Top,"
Some never to come back again.



"Rhymes

of a

Lost Battalion

Doughboy"

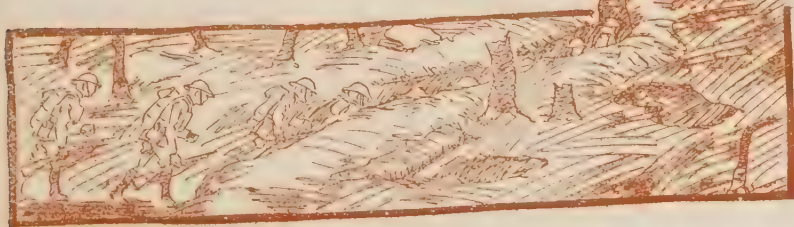
The air and trees were full of sounds
As we started in that night,
And you could hear the thud, thud, thud of
feet on the ground;—
As we went marching towards the fight.

To an open space in the road we came,
And God! what a sight we did see,
The whole sky-line it was aflame
With our barrage for Democracy.

"Sh-h! Hush! Make no noise,
As we're going in real soon,"
And you could almost hear the heartbeats;
As we crept in platoon by platoon.

Soon we were in our places
Against that cold ground so bare,
And then we started waiting, waiting and
waiting—
My God! but it was cold waiting there.

At eleven P. M. on that eventful night
Our barrage opened up with a flare,
And the earth it trembled and shook as in
fright,
As we waited in the cold "Up There."



**"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"**



God! how the minutes dragged;
You'd think each one was a day,
As we laid there waiting in the cold,
For "zero" hour and the break of day.

Finally five-thirty, the "zero" hour came,
And the word was passed down the line;
Go "Over the Top," boys, and "Play the
Game,"

And break their damn "Kremhilde line."

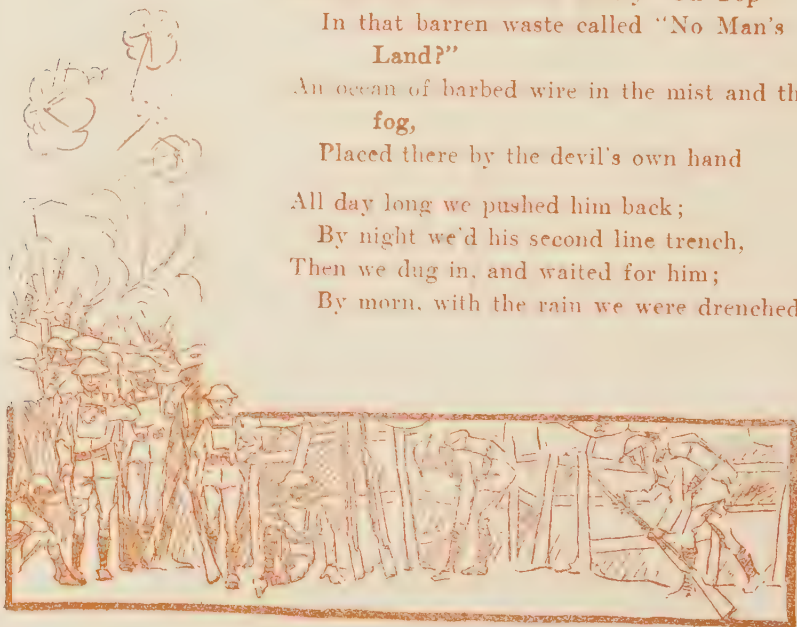
A million thoughts flash through your minds,
As you go "Over the Top," my boys,
And those thoughts bring realization,
Of the sweetness of life and its joys.

What did we find when finally "On Top"
In that barren waste called "No Man's
Land?"

An ocean of barbed wire in the mist and the
fog,

Placed there by the devil's own hand

All day long we pushed him back;
By night we'd his second line trench,
Then we dug in, and waited for him;
By morn, with the rain we were drenched.



The men were gaunt with hunger,
For what food we had was gone;
But there was the Boche ahead of us.
So we had to push on, and on! and on!

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Were you ever out in the Battlefields,
With the dead just stacked all around,
With the earth in a tremble from the fear and
fright,
Of the blood on its sacred ground?

While comrades you loved as brothers and
more
Laid there wounded, and moaning in pain,
And with a gnawing emptiness in your heart,
You wondered, where was War's Gain?

For three days we went till our strength was
spent,
Midst sights too terrible to tell;
And by the time we landed in a trap that
night,
I can tell you, we'd all seen hell.

Exhausted from fighting and dead for sleep.
Were we, as we dug in that night,
And as we laid there in the cold and the rain.
We wondered, if war was ever right.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

At the break of dawn when we looked around,
We knew we were in a tight place;
For the Boche they had surrounded us,
But we met him face to face.

For three long days we laid in that trap,
In mud clear up to our knees;
Sleepless, hungry and dying from thirst,
Amid those splintered Argonne trees.

With all hopes gone and our hearts in despair,
A whisper came down the line;
That at last the longed for relief had arrived,
And God knows, it came just in time.

We went at the food like a pack of wolves
That had starved the whole winter thru,
And between the munching of bites you'd hear,
Mumbled prayers of thanks to our comrades
so true.

The forest was thick as some African glade,
And with hands and faces bad torn,
We looked like phantoms from out o' hell,
And from war's delusions were shorn.



No one could picture, try as they might,
The horror and hell of it all,
And that our Company lost ninety men afore
night,
Seemed to matter as nothing at all.

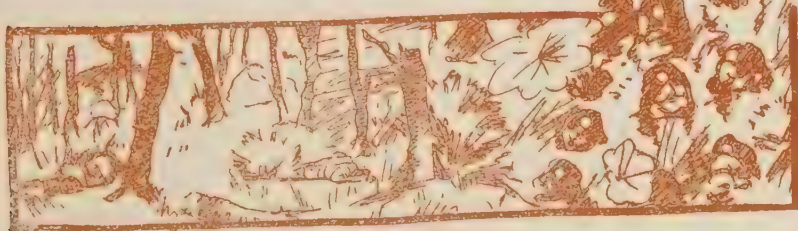
*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

But on and on we carried the fight,
And crushed the best that he had,
And gained our objective but were again in
a trap;
By then we were mad, fighting mad.

On the side of a cliff two hundred feet high,
We dug in like so many moles,
And death was the penalty that you paid,
Should you stick your head from those
holes.

Did you ever lay out in the cold all night,
When the frost just creeps thru the
ground;
With an empty gut and a parched tongue,
In a place not fit for a hound?

If you have, perhaps you can sense,
Of the things I'm a-tryin' to tell,
And why every man who came out alive,
Could say that he'd live thru Hell.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Fighting all day, holding out by pure grit,
An' fighting at night by the flare;
Oh! the suffering we bore can never be told,
Of those six days and nights spent there.

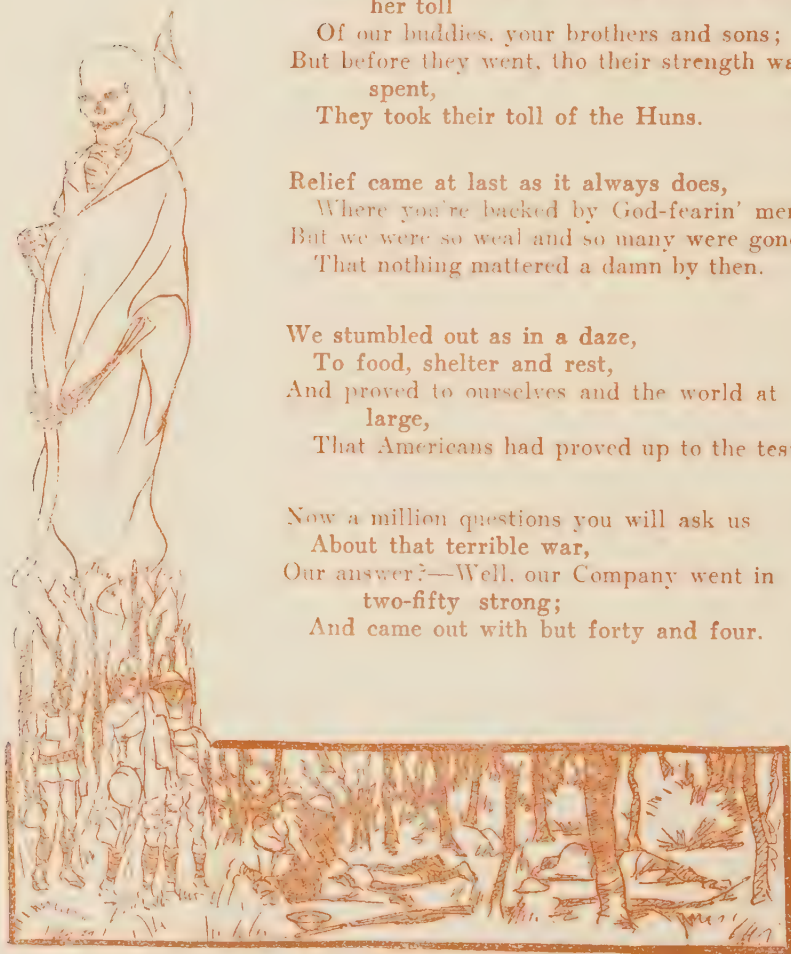
Death stalked thru our ranks, took ten fold
her toll

Of our buddies, your brothers and sons;
But before they went, tho their strength was
spent,
They took their toll of the Huns.

Relief came at last as it always does,
Where you're backed by God-fearin' men,
But we were so weal and so many were gone,
That nothing mattered a damn by then.

We stumbled out as in a daze,
To food, shelter and rest,
And proved to ourselves and the world at
large,
That Americans had proved up to the test.

Now a million questions you will ask us
About that terrible war,
Our answer?—Well, our Company went in
two-fifty strong;
And came out with but forty and four.



Mother

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

At the close of a spring day in Sable,
I sat in my room alone,
The sun was slowly sinking
And my thots turned back to home.

Thots of my dear old mother,
And how much was hers to bear;
And in fancy I could see her
In the old familiar chair.

Always thinking of me,
And always praying, too;
Slowly, the truth dawned on me,
Of how much she had been thru.

Of the long, endless nights of waiting.
And those anxious days of pain;
Wishing, hoping and praying,
That her boy may return again.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Gassed

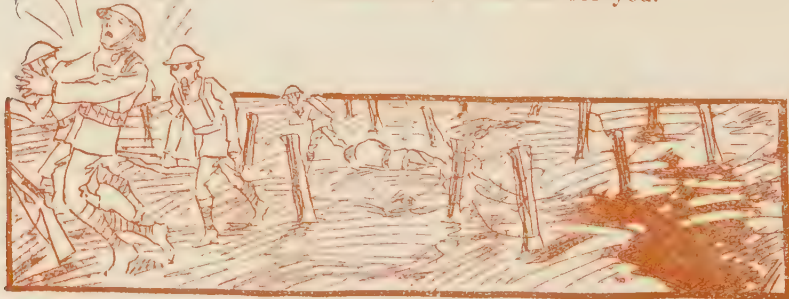
I've gone all day in a sortav' a daze,
An' felt the horror of death,
I don't mind the fight 'cause I know I'm right,
But I'm worried about my breath.

It feels like a ball of red-hot fire,
Turned loose from Hell's own door,
An' there seems to be no ease for me,
An' it's hurting me more and more.

I can feel myself go crumpling,
An' fall in a sudden heap,
An' slowly the truth dawns on me,
That I was gassed last night in my sleep.

The doctor says I'll pull thru all right,
An' am good for a few more years,
But I'm thinking of my dear old mother,
An' I just can't keep back the tears.

I've paid the debt that manhood brings,
To make an ideal stand true,
And if, perhaps, I've forgot how to smile,
Remember, it was all for you.



Oh Boy!

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

When you're again in your civies,
And strolling down the street,
No doubt a former officer,
You will surely meet.

Then you'll snap up to attention,
As you've always done before,
Only to find at close inspection,
It's the officer you abhor.

Then your thots will quickly wander,
'Way back to "Rainy France,"
And you'll get the inspiration,
That at last here is your chance.

So you'll bring your hand up smartly,
'Til it's somewhere near your nose,
And your face'll light up with a smile of joy,
And you'll say to yourself, "Here goes—
OH BOY!"



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

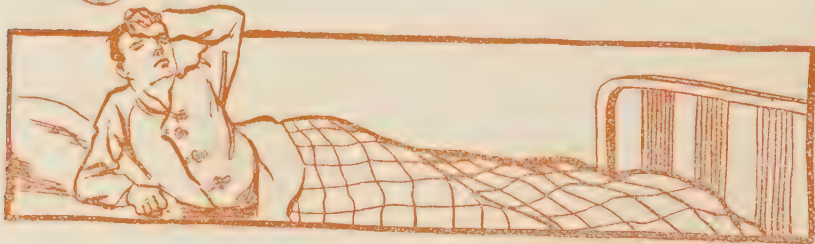
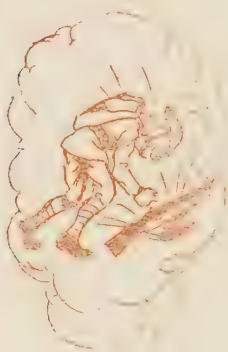
Thots

Oh God! to get away from it all!
Those Thots! Those Thots! that come,
To blind forever those memories,
And the sound of the bullet's hum.

To live once more as I did before
In peace and quiet and rest,
And to just forget for a little while,
That it took from my life the best.

At night, when all is quiet,
And I'm lying alone in bed,
There comes like a vision a motion picture,
Of battlefields, and the dead! the dead!

Will I never forget that Hell "Over There"
And the tales the battlefields tell;
Of the price "My Buddies," paid with their
all;
Oh! I tell you it's Hell, just downright
Hell!



An' there's my buddy, Chet,
I can see him plain as can be;
A-layin' "Out There" a crumpled heap,
And seems like he's callin' to me.

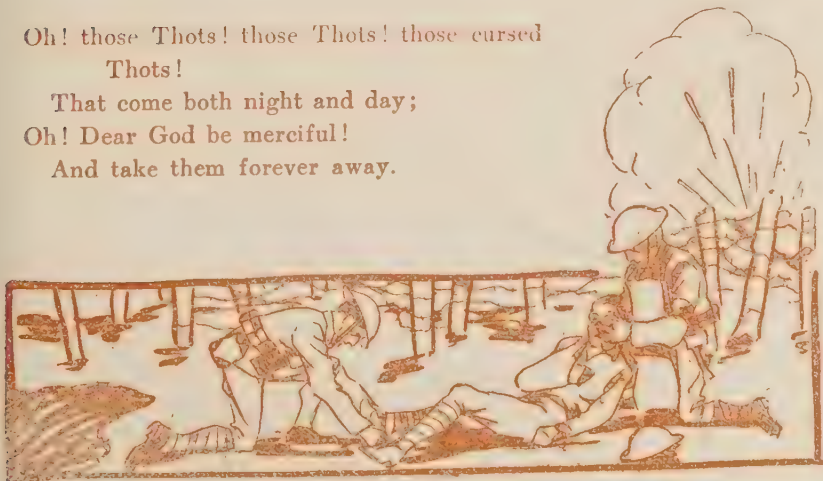
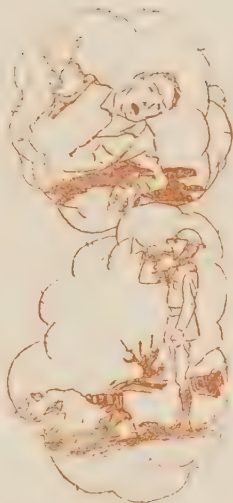
*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

I can hear the "big 'uns" screech an' scream,
As they go flying o'er my head,
An' they seem to say both night and day,
Remember, the dead—the dead!

An' sometimes I think as I sit here alone,
That perhaps it might've been best,
If I too, had paid that great price,
And were out there now with the rest.

Oh! those Thots! those Thots! those cursed
Thots!

That come both night and day;
Oh! Dear God be merciful!
And take them forever away.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

The Price

Now listen here, old Pal of mine,
I've fought from the Vesle clear up to the
Rhine,
At Chateau Thierry and in the Argonne
Wood,
I done my bit' as best I could.

Why, I've cut my way through an ocean of
wire,
And stood the test when under fire,
I've lain in the cold and the rain all night,
Fought like hell for what I thot was right.

I've marched to the band and felt mighty
proud,
Because I was one of the fighting crowd,
And now I'm back in this land of ours,
And will be in my civies in a few short hours.

But, somehow or other it all seems bare,
And I feel like hell when people stare,
For some are thinking of loved ones lost,
And others of how much we're going to cost.

And that's the bunch I'm sore about,
The patriot who was so willing to shout,
Then turn us out when we came home,
On two months' pay in the world to roam.



The Returns

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

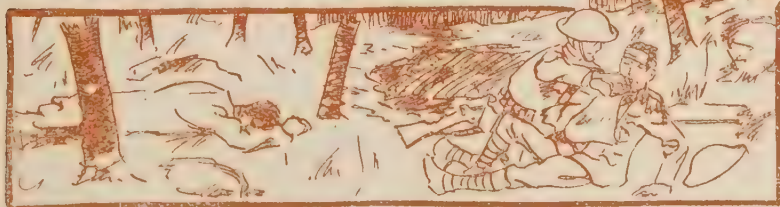
Buddy of mine, you're wrong, all wrong,
You'll soon again be one of the throng,
But not as you were when you went away,
But a proved man now and the man of the day.

Why, boy, just think of what you've been thru,
And the glory of knowin' that you've been true,
Think of the "Buddies" whom you gave a hand,
Why, you gained the love of your fellow man.

Think of the knowledge you did gain,
When you pushed clear thru to Alsace-Lorraine,
Think for a moment of some homely French folk,
That you helped release from the Hun's terrible yoke.

Why, they expressed to you in their attitude,
An ocean of love and real gratitude,
And in one small second of that war,
You've lived a thousand lives or more.

Tho you may not have your share of gold,
What you learned "Up There" is wealth untold;
And the big thing you gained from what you've been thru,
Is that high ideal of being true.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

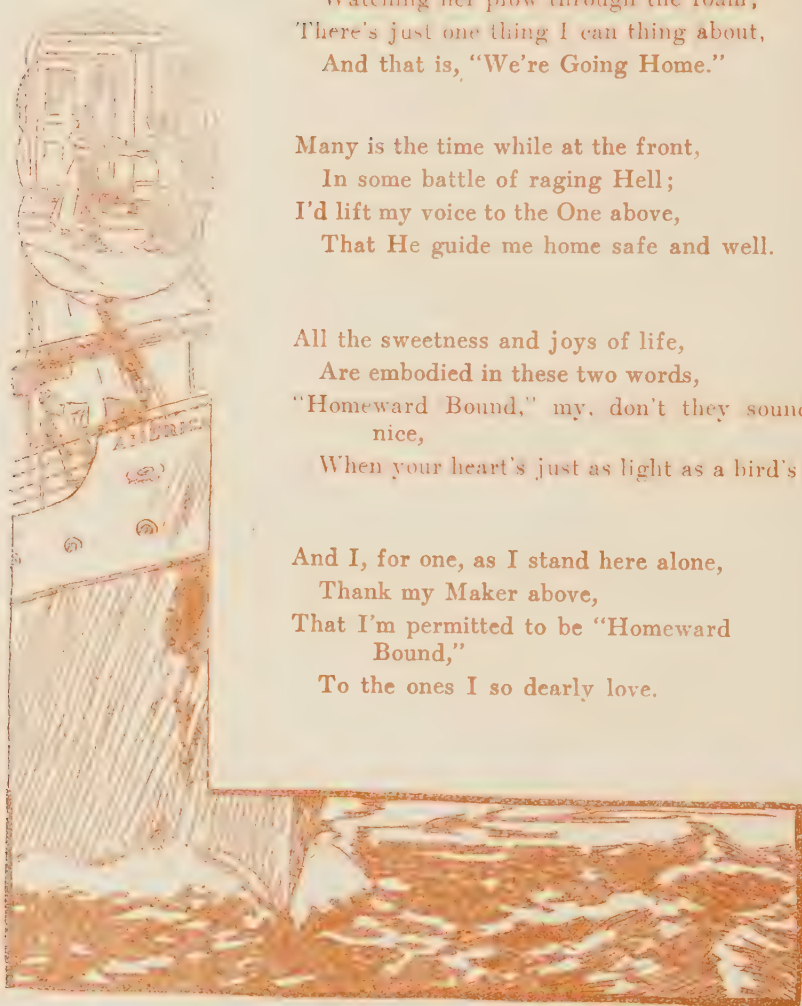
Homeward Bound

As I stand on this transport here by the rail,
Watching her plow through the foam;
There's just one thing I can thing about,
And that is, "We're Going Home."

Many is the time while at the front,
In some battle of raging Hell;
I'd lift my voice to the One above,
That He guide me home safe and well.

All the sweetness and joys of life,
Are embodied in these two words,
"Homeward Bound," my, don't they sound
nice,
When your heart's just as light as a bird's?

And I, for one, as I stand here alone,
Thank my Maker above,
That I'm permitted to be "Homeward
Bound,"
To the ones I so dearly love.



Let's Go

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

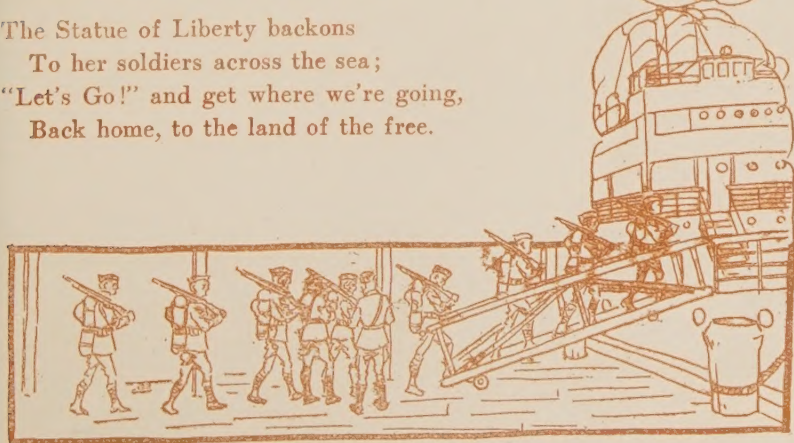
'Twas Uncle Sammy's doughboys
That put the Kibosh on the Hun;
Now we're waiting for "That Transport"
And we'll take her on the run.

Oh, why do you wait, Mr. Baker?
Just send us a ship or a raft;
For the U. S. A. and our freedom,
We'd sail on any old craft.

'At first we were going home Christmas,
And then on New Year's Day;
But now it's the fifteenth of April,
Unless they change it to May.

Now General Pershing's motto
Is a good one, we all know;
"Let's go where we're going today, boys,"
And you bet, we're ready to go.

The Statue of Liberty beckons
To her soldiers across the sea;
"Let's Go!" and get where we're going,
Back home, to the land of the free.



The Debt

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

My Pals are all around me,
And it seems like a horrible dream,
But there goes my "Buddie" damn bad hit
An' I go mad when I hear his scream.

My blood boils up in red, red rage,
And I lose the last of my will;
I'm turned to beast and mad man,
And my cry is to kill—to kill!

I rage and mutter all the night,
And wait for the break of day;
For my mind is made with that one thot,
That they must repay!—repay!

* * * *

You're gone, so why should I smile and lie,
And say that life's worth while,
When gladly I'd join you where you are,
Just to see once again your smile.

I'll try my best to square the debt,
But, Pal, it can never be done,
So may you rest in peace o'er here,
'Neath the new-made cross that you've won.



Drawings by
PRIVATE FRANKLIN SLT



